

words and walls

[Nehemiah 2.19-20; 4.1-6]

under attack

Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem

destructive words

Nehemiah 2.19

Nehemiah 4.1-3

Nehemiah's responses

Nehemiah 2.20

Nehemiah 4.4-6

some things to consider

the messages we hear

why do we do what we do?

James 4.1-3

fear of failure?

2 Corinthians 12.9-10

kingdoms

Matthew 6.25-34

[big questions]

What are the destructive messages you are hearing and how are you responding to them?

What fuels your responses?

In what ways do you need to let God direct your responses?

Memorize this-

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
-2 Corinthians 12.9-10 (NIV)

[repair and restore.05]

[repair and restore.05]

words and walls : Nehemiah 2.19-20; 4.1-6
[going deeper]

What thought, idea or observation from this teaching did you find to be the most useful, encouraging, eye-opening or even troubling? Explain.

How would you describe the power of words? Describe a time when words were used to really encourage and empower you. Describe a time when it felt like words were destroying you.

Why do you think words are so powerful? One author put it this way, "words create worlds." What do you think he meant and how does that work?

Read Nehemiah 2.19-20

What was the message that was communicated to Nehemiah and the wall-builders? What do you think the intent of the message was?

What do you think motivated Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem's words? What fueled Nehemiah's response?

Read Nehemiah 4.1-6

What was the message communicated to Nehemiah and the wall-builders this time? What reactions do you think they were trying to cause?

Describe Nehemiah's response. What do you think about his response? How do you think Nehemiah's responses encouraged the wall-builders to keep going?

Think about Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem's words and actions. What do you think motivated them? Is it possible that they were afraid of something? What might that have been? Can you relate?

How does this relate to our use of destructive words and why we do it? What do our destructive words reveal about us? What might that reveal about our view of God?

It seems like there may have been a kingdom issue here. Every one of us is pursuing and embracing a kingdom; either it's one of our own building or its God's kingdom. How would the kingdom we are embracing inform our responses to the things that are happening around us?

When my kingdom is threatened, I will do anything to try to preserve it. Describe some of the things we do to try to preserve our kingdoms.

How does our fear of failure work in to this? Is it possible that we tie our identity to our idea of success? How does that affect our quality of life and our relationships with others? How does this relate to Nehemiah's perspective of success?

How often do we discover that the most common source of destructive messages aimed at us is actually our selves? Why do you think this happens? What does this reveal about our relationship with God and our selves?

Nehemiah's response was to entrust the messengers and the work to God. Describe how you would do that in response to the messages that you receive. How does that help?

How do you sense God wants you to respond to what you have learned?